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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**COAST GUARD PETTY OFFICERS AND FORMER GRENADIAN POLICE OFFICER
ARRESTED FOR CONSPIRACY TO IMPORT COCAINE**

BALTIMORE, Maryland - Thomas M. DiBiagio, United States Attorney for the District of Maryland, announced that Wendy Bens, age 25, Jonathan Louis DeCarlo, age 23, both of Boston, Massachusetts, and Alison Cletus Isaac Alexander, age 35, a citizen of Grenada and U.S. resident alien residing in Yorktown, Virginia, have been charged in federal court with conspiracy to import cocaine.

Bens, an electrician's mate and DeCarlo, a gunner's mate, are United States Coast Guard petty officers assigned to the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Spencer which is homeported in Boston, Massachusetts. Alexander had previously been a police officer in Grenada and served on a drug task force.

According to the federal criminal complaints filed yesterday in U.S. District Court in Maryland, and unsealed today, the criminal investigation began after Customs and Border Protection Officers seized approximately four pounds of cocaine found in Alexander's suitcase after he arrived

at the Baltimore Washington International Airport from the Caribbean on January 27, 2004. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents then replaced the cocaine with a sham powdered substance, and permitted Alexander to deliver the suitcase to his United States contacts at a local hotel, where it was picked up by Bens and DeCarlo. Both were subsequently arrested by ICE agents.

If convicted, Bens, DeCarlo and Alexander face sentences of up to 40 years imprisonment and a \$2 million fine for the drug charges.

A complaint is not a finding of guilt. An individual charged by complaint or indictment is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty at some later criminal proceeding.

The case was investigated by United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Department of Homeland Security and detectives from the Baltimore City Police Department. The Coast Guard Investigative Service assisted in the investigation. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Michael J. Leotta and James G. Warwick.